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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT,

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2004

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES

BRIEFING

EDITORIAL OPINION

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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Turkey's critical appointment with the EU - Aksam  
Erdogan's day of persuasion in Brussels - Hurriyet  
Turkey locked on to Erdogan's Brussels meetings - Sabah  
HRW: Torture continues in Turkey - Aksam  
'Dr. Microbe' to be released - Hurriyet  
Zarkawi's right hand man, al-Shami, killed - Milliyet  
Iraqi insurgents attack Abu-Ghraib - Sabah

OPINION MAKERS

Erdogan to try to persuade EU leaders - Yeni Safak  
US treats Yusuf Islam like a terrorist - Zaman  
Blood bath in Baghdad: 27 killed - Zaman  
Iraqi government set to release two Iraqi weapons experts - Radikal  
NATO to expand role in Iraq - Zaman  
Iraq's new Turkey envoy presents credentials to Sezer - Yeni Safak  
HRW: Torture widespread in Turkey - Cumhuriyet  
Sharon threatens Arafat with assassination - Cumhuriyet  
American women favor Bush over Kerry - Radikal  
Moscow arrests the head of 'Black Widows' - Radikal

BRIEFING

PM Erdogan in Brussels to ease EU concerns over adultery:  
PM Erdogan will try to persuade EU officials today in Brussels that there are no problems with Turkey's penal code reform, which has stalled in the Parliament, in a bid to ease EU concerns ahead of the October 6 EU Commission report on Turkey's candidacy. Erdogan said before departing for Brussels that he was going to 'ensure that the EU agrees to open talks with Turkey without delay at the EU December summit.' Justice Minister Cemil Cicek and State Minister for Religious Affairs Mehmet Aydin accompanied Erdogan to Brussels. Papers believe that the report will offer a conditional recommendation, making it less likely that the 25 EU leaders will agree to open talks at the December summit. The papers say the AKP is split over criminalizing adultery, with Erdogan taking the side of the hardliners.  
'Erdogan's insistence on outlawing adultery has damaged Turkey's image in the EU,' mainstream dailies report. German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, a strong supporter of Turkish EU entry, said on Wednesday he believed Turkey would continue its reforms and was unlikely to introduce a ban on adultery. The European Commission has said it cannot recommend the start of entry talks with Ankara before the revised penal code is approved. Schroeder said Germany would back starting talks with Turkey if the Commission produced a positive report. 'The negotiations will last a very long time, and may take around 10 to 15 years,' he said. European Commission President-designate Jose Manuel Barroso said on Wednesday that Turkey 'does not yet meet the criteria' to join the European bloc. In Brussels, Erdogan will meet with EU expansion chief Verheugen at noon today, and will then talk with European Parliament Chairman Borrell. Meanwhile, Parliament Speaker Bulent Aric is expected to wait to see the outcome of Erdogan's meetings in Brussels before deciding whether to call the parliament back into session before its scheduled opening on October 1.

FM Gul in New York: On Wednesday, FM Abdullah Gul attended the opening of the 59th UN General Assembly in New York. Gul is lobbying in New York to get a temporary seat for Turkey on the UN Security Council. He is also seeking support for ending the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots. The Turkish FM met yesterday with his Israeli counterpart, Silvan Shalom. Shalom conveyed to Gul Israeli PM Sharon's invitation for PM Erdogan to visit Israel at the earliest opportunity. Shalom also told Gul that Tel Aviv would send a delegation to Turkey to brief Ankara regarding recent

developments in the Middle East peace process.

Turkish truckers killed in Iraq: Two Turkish truck drivers, Cuma Yilmaz and Mehmet Atatan, were shot dead around Mosul on Tuesday while en route to Turkey. Atatan, a trucker from the southeast Turkish province Gaziantep, was reportedly carrying potable water for US troops at Mosul Airport. Turkish dailies say that the Turkish government has not yet taken a clear position in the face of the killings and abductions in Iraq. On Wednesday, State Minister Kursad Tuzmen said it was 'significant' that attacks against Turks and Turkish companies in Iraq have recently intensified. Tuzmen implied that the attacks and abductions may have been incited by other countries that are uneasy with Turkey's presence in the Iraqi market, "Radikal" reports. 'Iraq has become a new Beirut, a new Lebanon,' Tuzmen said.

Human rights group criticizes Turkey: Human Rights Watch (HRW) said in an evaluation of Turkey that despite sweeping reforms, torture and mistreatment of detainees continues in the country. HRW Europe and Central Asia Director Holly Cartner said in Brussels Wednesday that the Turkish government's official declaration of 'zero tolerance' for torture had been a significant step, but complained that implementation was 'weak.' Only effective controls will prevent torture,' Cartner said. The HRW report also noted that Turkish detainees are frequently denied their right to legal counsel while in custody.

Yusuf Islam denied entry to the US: Turkish papers carry detailed coverage of Yusuf Islam, the pop singer formerly known as Cat Stevens, being denied entry into the US on a flight from London to Dulles International Airport in Washington. "Hurriyet" reports that the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) criticized the decision, saying it sent a disturbing message that moderate Muslims would be treated like terrorists. 'America is afraid of Yusuf Islam,' says a headline in the Islamist-oriented "Yeni Safak."

Greek Patriarchate awaits a response from Ankara: The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Istanbul said that Ankara has not responded to its several applications for the reopening of Halki Seminary, which has been kept closed since 1971. The Patriarchate press office on Wednesday complained about a lack of dialogue with Ankara on the issue, and called for an official response to their inquiries.

#### EDITORIALS

"Puzzling Attacks on Turkish Drivers in Iraq": Cengiz Candar wrote in the conservative-sensational "DB Tercuman" (9/23): "A Turkish taxi driver who drives between Diyarbakir and Zakho called me the other day to say that around 30 Turkish truck drivers have been killed in Mosul. Many other Turkish drivers entering Iraq through Habur border gate are complaining about the killings and demanding security measures for their safety. I asked the taxi driver who he is expecting would take such measures - the Turkish Government, the US, or Barzani? His answer was that the first responsibility lay with Barzani. He added that Arabs and some Turkmen were carrying out these attacks. Turkish Foreign Ministry recently drew attention to the systematic killing of Turkish drivers, implying the presence of powers that don't want Turkish interference in Iraq. The Foreign Ministry implied that the deterioration in the Turkish-American relationship has led to these problems. It is still an open question who is behind the violence and terror in Iraq and what is motivating it. It is not satisfactory to say that it is the Iraqi resistance fighting against the American occupation. Why should the resistance attack Turks? Besides, the resistance in Tal Afar were Shiite-Turkmen who claimed to belong to Ansar-Al Islam. As a branch of Al-Qaeda, what is Ansar-Al Islam doing among the Shiite-Turkmen population in Tal Afar? Yesterday's "Financial Times" reported that Turkey has not been able to determine a policy for Iraq, and was unable to control developments there. Therefore, Turkey is being dragged along by events to which it can only react. According to Turkish MFA evaluations, Iran is a suspect. If that is the case, why is Foreign Minister Gul giving priority to cooperation with Iran and Syria each time Iraq becomes an issue? If one motivation behind the attacks against Turkish targets is to create a rift between Turkey and the US, why did the Turkish FM imply that Turkey may stop cooperating with the US in Iraq? Iraqi PM Allavi had been scheduled to come to Turkey two weeks ago. Why didn't he come? When will he come? Iraq is still a huge puzzle. But it is no mystery that Turkey has become very ineffective in Iraq."

"Last Tango in Brussels": Derya Sazak commented in the mass appeal "Milliyet" (9/23): "PM Erdogan is going to Brussels for the last tango. Adultery or the EU? If it hadn't been for the AKP's efforts to add adultery as a crime to the Turkish Penal Code, PM

Erdogan's Brussels visit would have been more like a holiday than an official visit. Because the EU Commission had already prepared its report and, on October 6, would have recommended that Turkey begin accession negotiations in 2005. AKP's insistence on the adultery provision destroyed this plan. After two and a half years of determined efforts, PM Erdogan, by his own hand, has pushed the EU project to the brink. Some columnists warned the PM that if he insists on the adultery issue during his discussions in Brussels, it will be a big mistake. If the Turkish Penal Code is not passed by the parliament before October 6 without the adultery issue, there will likely be some new conditions for starting negotiations. During the last tango in Brussels, the Prime Minister shouldn't play with Turkey's destiny". EDELMAN